

Exercise and Breast Cancer

We have all heard that exercise has many benefits: It is essential to overall good health and may help prevent many diseases, including breast cancer. Recent findings from the Nurses' Health Study suggest regular exercise may also help women survive the disease.

Walking Toward Recovery

The research discovered that women with breast cancer who exercise may have a greater chance of survival than those who are sedentary. The study showed that women who walked for three to eight hours a week cut their risk of dying from the disease by half.

The researchers who presented the study suggest that exercise may help fight breast cancer by burning the stored fat that produces estrogen. Estrogen can fuel breast cancer growth.

Shaping Up for Prevention

Exercise has also been shown to reduce the risk of developing breast cancer in the first place. A study published in 1999 in the Archives of Internal Medicine found that women who exercised seven or more hours a week were about 20 percent less likely to develop breast cancer than women who exercised less than one hour per week.

Getting started can be simple. A vigorous walk on most days can be a great weapon against this disease.